



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

**NOV 6 2008**

The Honorable Brian Schweitzer  
Governor  
State of Montana  
Helena, Montana 59620-0801

Dear Governor Schweitzer:

Thank you for your letters of August 6 through October 9, 2008, requesting a disaster designation for 12 Montana counties due to losses caused by drought, and other disasters that occurred in 2008. Those counties are:

Broadwater	Fallon	Richland
Custer	Golden Valley	Roosevelt
Daniels	McCone	Sheridan
Dawson	Prairie	Wibaux

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) has reviewed the Loss Assessment Reports, along with additional information submitted by the State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency (FSA). Based on this review, USDA has determined that there were sufficient production losses to warrant a Secretarial natural disaster designation. Therefore, I am designating all 12 Montana counties named above as primary natural disaster areas due to losses caused by a combination of drought, excessive heat, hail, severe storms, high winds, wildfires, and insects that occurred during the period of January 1, 2008, and continuing.

In accordance with section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, additional areas of your State are named as contiguous disaster counties. Those counties are:

Carter	Lewis and Clark	Stillwater
Fergus	Meagher	Sweet Grass
Gallatin	Musselshell	Valley
Garfield	Powder River	Wheatland
Jefferson	Rosebud	Yellowstone

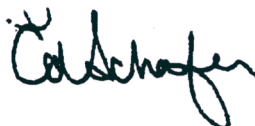
The Honorable Brian Schweitzer

Page 2

This designation makes farm operators in both primary and contiguous counties eligible to be considered for assistance from FSA, provided eligibility requirements are met. This assistance includes FSA emergency loans and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program which was approved as part of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008. FSA will consider each application on its own merit by taking into account the extent of losses, security available, and repayment ability.

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Schafer", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Edward T. Schafer  
Secretary